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and I very much doubt he spent his weekend reading it...

<http://www.nytimes.com/aponline/national/AP-Climate-Change.html>

June 4, 2002

Bush Dismisses Climate Change Study

By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Filed at 6:29 p.m. ET

WASHINGTON (AP) -- President Bush dismissed on Tuesday a report put out by his administration warning that human activities are behind climate change that is having significant effects on the environment.

The report to the United Nations -- compiled by the Environmental Protection Agency from information provided by climate experts at six agencies, including the EPA -- puts most of the blame for recent global warming on the burning of fossil fuels that release carbon dioxide and other heat-trapping gases into the environment.

But it suggests nothing beyond voluntary action by industry for dealing with the so-called ``greenhouse'' gases, the program Bush advocated in rejecting a treaty negotiated in Kyoto, Japan, in 1997 calling for mandatory reduction of those gases by industrial nations.

``I read the report put out by the bureaucracy,'' Bush said dismissively Tuesday when asked about the EPA report, adding that he still opposes the Kyoto treaty.

White House spokesman Scott McClellan said the report was the result of work by staff at the agencies and the White House's Council on Environmental Quality, whose chairman was appointed by Bush to serve as his principal environmental policy adviser.

Japan ratified the international accord Tuesday and urged the United States and other countries to join efforts to fight global warming by cutting emissions of heat-trapping gases. Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's Cabinet gave final approval to the Kyoto Protocol, which passed the upper and lower houses of Parliament last month.

The report submitted to the United Nations by the State Department was the

first by the Bush administration to mostly blame human activity for global warming.

``The changes observed over the last several decades are likely mostly due to human activities, but we cannot rule out that some significant part of these changes is also a reflection of natural variability,' the report says.

``Human-induced warming and associated sea level rises are expected to continue through the 21st century,' it says. ``Secondary effects ... include increases in rainfall rates and increased susceptibility of semiarid regions to drought.''

The report also says that despite some lingering scientific uncertainties, ``There is general agreement that the observed warming is real and has been particularly strong within the past 20 years.''

In the United States, changes over the next few decades are expected to put Southeastern coastal communities at greater risk of storm surges, prompt more uncomfortable heat waves in cities and reduce snowpack and water supplies in the West.

Kalee Kreider, global warming campaign director for the National Environmental Trust, an advocacy group, said environmentalists want from the administration a climate change plan that joins with other nations in requiring carbon dioxide emission reductions and increased fuel efficiency requirements for vehicles.

``It's good they've done a 180-degree turn on the science. Given the audience, they pretty much had to,' Kreider said. ``But we're still waiting for a plan that mandates pollution cuts.''

Last year, the White House described climate change as a serious issue but was undecided about how much of the problem should be blamed on human activities. President Bush favors a climate plan with voluntary measures to slow the rate of growth in gas emissions but allow them to continue to rise.

McClellan said the administration remains convinced the president's plan is the best path. He pointed to language in the report acknowledging ``considerable uncertainty in current understanding of how climate varies naturally.''

And, he said, Bush's plan will ``significantly reduce the growth of greenhouse gas emissions,' while investing in new science and technology to curb them. Bush has proposed spending \$4.5 billion on climate change science and technology.

European Union countries formally signed the Kyoto Protocol on Friday. It was negotiated in 1997 to stem pollution and global warming; President Bush has rejected it. The ratification by Japan and the 15 EU countries at the headquarters of the United Nations represented a major step toward putting the treaty into force.

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On the Net:

Climate Action Report 2002:

<http://www.epa.gov/globalwarming/publications/car>

U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change: <http://unfccc.int>

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